

# FORGING A PATH HOME

Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board  
September 2011



*2011 Housing  
Needs Report*

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2011 Housing Needs Report

## Executive Summary

Nearly 1,650 CSB clients (people with intellectual disabilities, mental illness or substance use disorders) needed affordable housing as of June 2011.

*Of those, approximately:*

- 1,152 (70 percent) can afford to pay no more than \$205 per month toward rent. 213 (13 percent) have experienced homelessness as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development. If “homeless” is more broadly defined to include those who are precariously housed and face imminent displacement, this number greatly increases.
- 198 (12 percent) are age 55 and older.
- 565 (35 percent) face some type of barrier to securing housing:
  - Accessibility – 45
  - Interaction with the criminal justice system – 250
  - Credit issues or trouble paying bills – 270
- 1,429 (87 percent) can live in apartments or townhouses, while 169 (10 percent) require a shared single family home (e.g., group home) and 48 (3 percent) require assisted living in a larger setting.
- 1,564 (95 percent) require supportive services to obtain and maintain housing in the community. Of those, 750 (48 percent) need supervised or intensive levels of assistance.

*In addition:*

- Fairfax County Public Schools identified 12 school age youth as homeless unaccompanied youth who may be eligible for CSB services as of September 2011.
- The populations the CSB serves over the next several years will expand to include persons with developmental disabilities (especially autism), traumatic brain injury and veterans with service-related mental health conditions. A percentage of these populations will also require housing that is accessible and/or accompanied by personal assistance services, nursing, assistive technology and behavioral health supports.



If the CSB set a goal to meet the *current* existing housing need in ten years, the plan might look like this:

	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	TOTAL
Intensive	17	17	17	17	17	17	65	17	17	16	217
Supervised	53	53	53	53	53	53	53	53	53	56	533
Supportive	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	810
Housing with Time Limited/No Additional Services	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	5	86
<b>TOTAL</b>	160	160	160	160	160	160	208	160	160	160	1,646

Note: see page 2 of the report for definitions of these service levels

The following table illustrates the gap between the number of consumers targeted to receive different levels of housing and supports each year and the number who can be served based upon existing resources:

Year	FY 2012		FY 2013		FY 2014		FY 2015		FY 2016		FY 2017		FY 2018		FY 2019		FY 2020		FY 2021		TOTAL	
	Hsg	Svs	Hsg	Svs	Hsg	Svs	Hsg	Svs	Hsg	Svs	Hsg	Svs	Hsg	Svs	Hsg	Svs	Hsg	Svs	Hsg	Svs	Hsg	Svs
Intensive Gap	-15	-8	-12	-5	-15	-8	-14	-7	-15	-8	-62	-55	-15	-8	-14	-7	-15	-8	-13	-6	-190	-120
Supervised/Supported Gap	-92	-88	-93	-88	-93	-88	-93	-88	-93	-88	-93	-88	-93	-88	-93	-88	-93	-88	-96	-91	-932	-883
Housing w/limited services gap	42		7		7		7		7		7		7		7		7		11		109	

Note: Hsg = Housing, Svs = Supportive Services

This chart reveals a substantial annual and total gap in housing and services for individuals who need housing units and services at the supervised and supportive levels. The annual gap for those who need intensive housing and services is relatively small in every year except FY 2017. This jump in the gap simply represents the plan to meet the increased need for assisted living programs by developing a new program in FY 2012-FY 2016 and beginning program operations in FY 2017. There is actually a projected overage in housing resources for individuals who need time-limited services or no additional supportive services in their homes. This overage could be redirected to reduce the gaps in the other two areas.



*CSB clients who need affordable housing require:*

- **deeply subsidized, affordable housing**, paired with
- **supportive, supervised and intensive services**, that are **flexible, individualized, and linked to the client, not the site**, and
- **flexible housing programs with adaptations and modifications that address key housing barriers** including accessibility, credit issues and criminal history.

*The following recommendations are offered to fulfill these requirements:*

- (1) Pursue opportunities with the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) to expand rental subsidies such as Housing Choice Vouchers, project-based Section 8 vouchers and Bridging Affordability rental assistance on an annual basis. When possible, CSB clients with very low incomes should receive a priority or preference for these resources.
- (2) Support efforts to make local and statewide policy changes and develop resources that will stimulate the production of units for very low income households, especially those with disabilities. Likewise, play a key role in the development of the planned supportive services blueprint, which will help the county's Human Services agencies coordinate the services many persons with disabilities need to successfully participate in affordable housing programs.
- (3) Review the structure and capacity of the CSB's residential supportive services system to accommodate new housing opportunities. Study the organization of the existing residential supportive services system to determine what additional capacity will be required, how to most effectively deploy existing staff to individual units throughout the county, what services could be provided by the private sector, and how additional capacity will be funded.
  - Instead of operating residential "programs," make supportive services independent from existing housing so clients can change service levels but retain their housing and vice versa.
  - Transition clients with existing CSB-funded rental subsidies to other rental subsidy sources.
  - Make new service funding sources flexible: base eligibility for service on the level of support consumers need, not on diagnosis.
- (4) Expand the expertise of the CSB's Financial Assessment and Screening Team (FAST) around accessing funding sources for personal assistance services, assistive technology, nursing and behavioral supports.
- (5) Collaborate with nonprofit housing organizations to create a "third party" master leasing program.



- Provide subleases to consumers instead of program agreements.
  - Review consumers' housing status annually to determine whether they can be transitioned to a lease guarantee or a straight rental subsidy based on their income.
- (6) Explore housing policies, initiatives and approaches employed by ex-offender advocacy organizations and re-entry housing programs nationwide, especially those that serve adults with mental illness and/or substance use disorders.

- Collaborate with the FCRHA to review local Section 8 and Public Housing Administrative Plans to identify policies that will increase flexibility when determining whether individuals with criminal records who have successfully re-entered the community are eligible for housing choice vouchers and public housing.
- Develop strong relationships with landlords throughout the county to expand the availability of housing for low-income CSB clients.
- Assist tenants with paying the cost of premiums for landlords' commercial "damage" insurance, which reduces the risk to landlords if tenants damage the unit.
- Develop a program to bond tenants with criminal backgrounds to protect landlords in case of loss of money or property due to tenant-caused damage to the unit.
- Help consumers whose arrests did not result in conviction or those with minor convictions to expunge their records so they can legally qualify for housing.
- Develop transitional and permanent supportive housing options for offenders who have been incarcerated for long periods of time and face significant barriers to obtaining community housing.

(7) Implement strategies to increase the number of physically accessible units designated for CSB clients. Either make existing CSB-designated units accessible or secure additional accessible units for long-term use.



- Implement a rental accessibility modification program that provides grants to residents to make accessibility modifications with their landlords' approval.
- Provide grant funding to landlords who want to make accessibility improvements to their units in exchange for reserving these units for CSB clients.
- Work with the FCRHA to target project-based rental subsidies to existing accessible rental units.
- Collaborate with the FCRHA, nonprofits and other partners to explore the development of additional housing opportunities for CSB clients under the Section 811 program.

(8) Create a CSB team to determine clients' eligibility for various sources of housing assistance, help clients apply for housing assistance, and help them locate and apply for community housing.

(9) Support interagency and public-private collaborations to develop appropriate housing options for homeless youth.

# Acknowledgements

Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (the “CSB”) staff would like to thank the following county agencies and community partners for sharing their expertise, providing data, and reviewing this document.

*Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board*

*CSB Substance Use Disorders and Mental Health Workgroup*

*Department of Family Services, Disability Services Planning & Development*

*Department of Housing & Community Development*

*Office to Prevent & End Homelessness*

*Brain Injury Services*

*Fairfax County Public Schools Homeless Liaison’s Office*

*Virginia Wounded Warrior Program*

Most importantly, we would like to thank the individuals the CSB serves who attended our Consumer Housing Forum and shared their challenges and concerns around obtaining affordable housing and supportive services. Their stories put faces to the waitlist data, and impel us to not just count, but to act.

# Forging a Path Home

## Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board

### 2011 Housing Needs Report

*The quotes scattered throughout this report are from individuals the CSB serves who offered their personal perspectives about the importance of affordable housing for people with disabilities at the Consumer Housing Forum on June 8, 2011.*

#### I. Introduction

The Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (the “CSB”) provides a variety of programs and services that assist individuals with intellectual disabilities, mental illness and substance use disorders as they pursue self-determined, productive and valued lives in the community. Having a safe, decent affordable place to live is critical to reaching this goal. Obtaining affordable housing is a challenge for many Fairfax County residents in the current economic climate. However, for the individuals the CSB serves, this is a major impediment to recovery and stability. Consequently, the CSB must collaborate with the FCRHA and its nonprofit partners to develop affordable housing resources to address clients’ individual financial, support service, and accessibility needs; find ways to house those with criminal records who cannot utilize mainstream housing options; and create housing alternatives for young adults who are homeless yet not ready to live on their own.

*“I’m concerned about those who have schizophrenia or bipolar disorder. When they get kicked out of shelters, they need alternatives; otherwise they are living in tents in the woods. If you kick people out of the shelter because of their mental illness, where will they go?”*

This strategic housing plan outlines the housing needs of the individuals the CSB serves, reviews the existing resources the CSB has to address these needs, identifies the gaps between what our current housing resources can provide and the current need, and offers recommendations for bridging these gaps over the next ten years, between FY 2012 and FY 2021.

#### II. Housing Needs of Individuals the CSB Serves

Nearly 1,600 adults over age 17 in the CSB system need *permanent housing* in the community (as opposed to time-limited residential treatment programs). The vast majority (92%) are almost evenly split between adults with intellectual disabilities and adults with mental illness. The remaining 8% have substance use disorders. The CSB is currently unable to project the housing needs of the populations it does not yet serve, including persons with developmental disabilities, traumatic brain injuries and veterans with service-related mental health conditions. However, the housing needs of these individuals should be carefully tracked as the CSB begins to serve these populations.

**Service Needs:** These individuals differ greatly in the types and levels of assistance they need to successfully obtain and maintain housing in the community:

- 13% need intensive residential services that offer overnight care with treatment, ongoing supervision, training in independent living skills and/or assistance with activities of daily living. This service is similar to the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness' (OPEH's) "24/7" level of service.
- 33% need supervised residential services which are directly-operated or contracted, licensed or unlicensed residential programs that place and provide overnight care with supervision and services to individuals in apartments or other residential settings, typically for more than 30 days. Sponsored placements are also a form of supervised residential services. This service is similar to OPEH's "intensive" level of services.
- 49% require residential services at the supportive residential service level of intensity. These unstructured services support individuals in their own housing arrangements, and normally do not involve overnight care delivered by a program. This service is similar to OPEH's "moderate" level of service with contract frequency ranging from four times a week to daily.
- 5% require no ongoing supportive services, but need permanent housing in the community. This service is equivalent to OPEH's "time-limited" services.

The table below categorizes the housing waitlist by population served and level of support required.

*Table 1: Composite Community Housing Waitlist by Population and Level of Support Required*

<b>Population</b>	<b>Intensive</b> Includes: ID Congregate Residential & MH Assisted Living	<b>Supervised</b> Includes: ID – Congregate Residential, Supervised Apts. MH – Extension Apt Beds, New Horizons, Transitional Therapeutic Apts, Residential Intensive Care, PACT ADS – Residential Treatment	<b>Supportive</b> Includes: ID – Supported Residential MH – Shared Supportive Housing Program, Supported Housing Options Program, Brain Foundation, Bridge ADS – Residential Step Down Programs, Outpatient, Detox	<b>Housing Only (Time-Limited or No Additional Support Services in the Home)</b> Includes: All – Housing Location, Rent Subsidy, and/or Lease Guarantees.	<b>TOTAL</b>
ID	169	126	419	0	714
MH	48	135 from MHARS 176 from MHOS 51 from PACT	220 from MHARS 126 from MHOS	42 from MHOS	798
SUD	0	45	45	44	134
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>810</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>1,646</b>

ADS = Alcohol & Drug Services

ID = Intellectual Disabilities

MH = Mental Health

MHOS = Mental Health Outpatient Services

MHARS = Mental Health Adult Residential Services

PACT = Program of Assertive Community Treatment

SUD = Substance Use Disorders

**Notes:** This waitlist does NOT include individuals who need residential treatment services. The data for IDS and MHARS is current as of July 2011. The data for MHOS and ADS is not tracked on a monthly basis. These numbers are derived from an MHOS survey taken in November 2010 and CSB housing needs survey performed in January 2011.



**Ability to Afford Housing:** Approximately 70% of those who need permanent housing currently can afford a maximum rent of **\$205/month**, which is about 30% of the current monthly SSI maximum payment (\$675). The 2011 HUD fair market rent for a one bedroom apartment in Fairfax County is **\$1,289/month**. It is, therefore, no surprise that approximately 13% of CSB clients who need community housing (215 persons) are currently homeless. The majority of these homeless clients have either mental illness or a substance use disorder. This data is consistent with the 2011 Point In Time survey of homeless persons in Fairfax County, which found that nearly 60% of the 666 single individuals who were counted as literally homeless on January 26, 2011 had disabilities such as serious mental illness, substance abuse or both.

The following tables illustrate the number of individuals in each population who can afford rents at specific levels, and the number of homeless individuals in each population who need different levels of support. The U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) definition of “homeless” is used in these tables. An individual who is “homeless” according to HUD lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; and has a primary nighttime residence that is:

1. a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill);
2. an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or
3. a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

*Table 2: Estimated Persons on Composite Waitlist Who Can Pay at Different Rent Levels By Population*

Population	Less Than \$205/mo (11% AMI* & below)	Between \$205/mo & 545/mo (12% - 30% AMI)	Between \$546/mo & \$905/mo (31% - 50% AMI)	Over \$905/mo (Above 50% AMI)	TOTAL
ID	624	40	1	49	714
MH	488	218	37	55	798
SUD	40	66	21	7	134
TOTAL	1,152	324	59	111	1,646

\* AMI = area median income

**Note:** These numbers are imputed, based on percentages for each population and rent level established in the January 2011 CSB housing needs survey.

The total number of homeless persons the CSB serves who need housing is undoubtedly greater than the number on the composite waitlist. CSB Homeless Services and (PATH) Outreach staff have typically engaged homeless individuals with mental illness and/or substance use disorders and facilitated connections to housing. Despite these efforts, many individuals have not been placed on CSB waitlists for housing or residential programs for a variety of reasons. The new mid-County Intensive Community Treatment (ICT) team has successfully linked twenty formerly homeless individuals to housing in its first ten months of operation. The team discovered that none of these individuals were on a housing waiting list prior to receiving ICT services, and it took a team effort to comprehensively address these clients’ mental health, substance use, medical and case

management needs and support their transition to permanent housing. As new ICT teams begin working in North and South County, they are likely to encounter many more homeless individuals who are not on CSB waitlists for housing or residential programs. If “homeless” is more broadly defined to include those who are precariously housed and face imminent displacement, this number greatly increases.

**Special Populations:** Many individuals the CSB serves have unique circumstances that affect their ability to access typical housing options in the community. The following groups face particularly difficult hurdles to obtaining and maintaining housing in the community.

- *Ex-Offenders:* An estimated 250 of the individuals who need permanent housing have had some level of interaction with the criminal justice system that will impede their ability to independently lease housing from landlords that perform background checks. Approximately 80% have a mental illness diagnosis and 20% have a substance use disorder.
- *Persons with Accessibility Needs:* An estimated 45 persons on the CSB’s composite housing waitlist have mobility impairments that reflect a need for accessible housing. In addition, another 198 persons are currently age 55 or older and are likely to need accessible housing features some time in the near future. Adults with developmental disabilities, traumatic brain injuries and service-related conditions are also likely to need accessible housing features. As an illustration, approximately 73 adults with physical and/or sensory disabilities indicated a need for affordable, accessible housing through the Fairfax Area Disability Board’s 2009 Needs Assessment. Moreover, Brain Injury Services, a local service provider for persons with traumatic brain injury, currently serves 21 adults who need affordable, accessible housing. Most housing options in the county that might be affordable to these individuals are in older apartment buildings built before the Fair Housing Act Amendments were implemented in 1991 addressing basic accessibility requirements in covered multifamily dwellings.
- *Individuals with Poor or No Credit:* An estimated 270 persons needing permanent housing have significant money management or debt problems that may result in downgraded credit ratings. Landlords that perform credit checks often deny housing applications when they see individuals have judgments, eviction records, or outstanding rent or utility bills. In addition, individuals who have lived with family most of their lives generally have never had the opportunity to build a credit record. These individuals also have difficulty competing in the rental market.
- *Homeless Youth with Mental Illness, Substance Use Disorders or Intellectual Disabilities:* In addition to the nearly 1,650 adults identified above, Fairfax County

*“I bounced around shelters  
and homelessness for  
11 years in other states.  
When I got here to Fairfax,  
it was a godsend.  
Now we are dealing with  
my substance abuse and my  
mental health issues.”*

Public Schools (FCPS) identified another 351 school-aged youth as being “homeless unaccompanied youth” as of June 2011. These students meet the McKinney-Vento Act definition of homelessness and are living without their parent or legal guardian. Some are temporarily displaced from their homes while their parents seek work and/or adequate housing, and others are homeless for an extended period because their families are in crisis. The largest and oldest group of youth has chosen to leave home or was asked to leave due to irreparable family relationships. This subpopulation is the most transient and vulnerable. Nearly 300 homeless youth are in high school and live with little to no adult supervision. Although sixteen of these students work and receive a subsidy to rent a room while attending school and seven students live on their own and pay their own rent, most are not ready to assume the responsibility of renting and managing an apartment, nor do they have the resources to do so. In addition, these youth may be extremely vulnerable to predatory relationships and have cognitive, emotional, behavioral or mental health issues that impact their ability to live safely alone in the community. The CSB and FCPS staffed cases in which the young person had a special education history in September 2011 and identified approximately a dozen homeless youth who may be eligible for CSB services.

### **III. Existing Resources to Address the Need**

The CSB has built an array of housing options for the people it serves by:

- securing federal, state and local funding sources for rental subsidies and supportive services;
- developing partnerships with the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA), nonprofit affordable housing organizations, and private landlords to reserve units for CSB clients and to lease units to the CSB at below market rents; and
- collaborating with FCRHA, private landlords and nonprofit affordable housing organizations to develop accessible group homes.

As a result, the CSB’s current community housing portfolio consists of:

- 106 units serving 257 individuals through direct consumer leasing arrangements, and
- 176 units serving 517 individuals through CSB leases, contracts and memoranda of agreement.

The FCRHA makes approximately 86 of these units available, private landlords supply 53 units, and nonprofit organizations with whom the CSB partners provide 143 units.

The CSB also leases another 5 housing units from the FCRHA, 8 units from nonprofit organizations and 39 units from private landlords to provide 210 individuals residential treatment in the community. These units are not considered part of the “housing” portfolio, but part of the “residential treatment” portfolio.

The units and subsidies in the CSB’s housing portfolio generally have very low turnover and vacancy rates. Yet the need for such units and subsidies is steadily increasing. As a result, the CSB

and the FCRHA have forged a closer partnership over the last two years, and the FCRHA has assisted the CSB with increasing its capacity to meet the housing needs of those we serve, including:

- (1) 13 apartment units within FCRHA's Wedgewood Apartments serving 18 CSB clients whose incomes range from 20% to 30% of the area median income (AMI), which is \$15,060/year to \$22,590/year for a household of one person in FY 2012 for the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD HUD Metro Fair Market Rent Area.
- (2) 18 project-based vouchers,
- (3) access to homeless vouchers and public housing units through the Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA), Project Homes and Transitional Housing preferences,
- (4) a reservation of up to 10% of the Bridging Affordability rental subsidy funds targeted to serve individuals on county housing waitlists, and
- (5) TBRA vouchers for individuals currently in hospital, nursing or intermediate care facilities who want to live in the community. FCRHA provided these vouchers when HUD did not award Money Follows the Person vouchers to Fairfax County.

The following table shows how the CSB has utilized these resources to date:

Resource	Number of Slots Available	Number of Individuals Served	Comments
Wedgewood Apartments	18	6 MH 4 SUD	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wedgewood turns over units to the CSB as they become vacant. CSB has received 13 units as of 7/1/11.</li> <li>2. The County Department of Housing &amp; Community Development (DHCD) and the CSB negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding in which clients in Wedgewood CSB units would pay only 30% of their income toward rent.</li> </ol>
Project Based Vouchers	18	6 MH	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. DHCD did not receive enough responses from nonprofit housing providers to its last project based voucher RFP, which included the CSB's vouchers. It plans to re-issue the RFP.</li> <li>2. The CSB requested the FCRHA apply project-based vouchers to 6 units at its Stonegate Apartments to preserve living arrangements for six clients who were at immediate risk of losing their housing due to sizable rent increases. As a result, 6 vouchers will not immediately serve those on waiting lists because the vouchers are serving current CSB clients.</li> </ol>
Homeless Preference in the Housing Choice Voucher & Public Housing Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TBRA</li> <li>- Project HOMES</li> <li>- Transitional Housing</li> </ul>	Varies month to month	1 MH 1 SUD	The CSB signed a memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Office to Prevent & End Homelessness and Good Shepherd Housing enabling CSB to access FCRHA housing choice vouchers and FCRHA public housing units for its homeless clients through the Special Needs Homeless Initiative Preference (which is specifically for homeless CSB clients) and also through the TBRA, Project HOMES and Transitional Housing Preferences, which are for the broader homeless population. The CSB is obligated to provide one year of case management to ensure clients successfully navigate the voucher/public housing application process, housing search, lease-up and transition.
Bridging Affordability Rental Subsidies for the Homeless and for Individuals on County Waiting Lists	TBD: Early estimates are 25 – 30 people on CSB waitlists & 4 homeless individuals.	TBD	The county's Department of Purchasing awarded the Bridging Affordability Contract to the Northern Virginia Family Service Collaborative in May 2011. The CSB is working with the collaborative to structure its outreach to individuals on CSB residential waiting lists and to organize the supportive services CSB has agreed to provide through ICT teams.

Resource	Number of Slots Available	Number of Individuals Served	Comments
Money Follows the Person (MFP) Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) Vouchers	TBD	TBD	DHCD has made 25 TBRA vouchers available to non-elderly persons with disabilities who want to leave hospital, nursing and intermediate care facilities but need a rental subsidy and MFP Waiver to do so. The CSB will work with DHCD and the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) to place several individuals currently living in state training centers in local group homes using these vouchers. This initiative will not, however, reduce the housing waiting list.

#### IV. Gap Between Need and Ability to Deliver

If the CSB set a goal to simply meet the *current* existing housing need at each service intensity level within ten years in accordance with the county's Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness (excluding any projected net increases in demand), the plan might look like this:

*Table 6: Proposed 5 Year CSB Housing Goals, FY 2012 – FY 2016*

	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	TOTAL
Intensive	17	17	17	17	17	17	65	17	17	16	217
Supervised	53	53	53	53	53	53	53	53	53	56	533
Supportive	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	810
Housing w/Time Limited or No Additional Services	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	5	86
TOTAL	160	160	160	160	160	160	208	160	160	160	1,646

The gap analysis on the next page shows the maximum number of individuals for whom the CSB can provide both housing and services based upon existing resources, and pinpoints the number of individuals for whom we must identify housing and support service resources each year over the next ten years.

Table 7: Gap Between Annual Proposed CSB Housing Goals and Existing Capacity to Meet Housing Needs

Annual Total Housing Gap

Year	FY 2012		FY 2013		FY 2014		FY 2015		FY 2016		FY 2017		FY 2018		FY 2019		FY 2020		FY 2021		TOTAL	
ANNUAL HOUSING GOAL (# housed with appropriate services)	160	160	160	160	160	160	160	160	160	160	208	208	160	160	160	160	160	160	158	158	1646	1646
Projected Number Served by Housing Type & Service Level	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs
<b>Existing Intensive Resources</b>																						
Assisted Living - Stevenson Place Turnover			1	1			1	1			1	1			1	1			1	1	5	5
Group Home Programs																						
New ID Waivers (24% of 29 new waivers annually)		7	2	9		7		7		7		7		7		7		7		7	2	72
ID Waiver turnover (24% of est. 8/yr)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	20	20
TOTAL	2	9	5	12	2	9	3	10	2	9	3	10	2	9	3	10	2	9	3	10	27	97
Minus Intensive Goal	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	65	65	17	17	17	17	17	17	16	16	217	217
<b>EQUALS INTENSIVE GAP</b> (100% of gap/yr is ID pop)	-15	-8	-12	-5	-15	-8	-14	-7	-15	-8	-62	-55	-15	-8	-14	-7	-15	-8	-13	-6	-190	-120
<b>Existing Supervised/Supportive Resources (combined b/c service levels use similar housing types)</b>																						
New slots (CoC, Brain Foundation)	16	21		5		5		5		5		5		5		5		5		5	16	66
Turnover slots	20	19	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	290	289
Backfill slots	6	6	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	99	99
TOTAL	42	46	41	46	41	46	41	46	41	46	41	46	41	46	41	46	41	46	41	46	405	460
Minus Supervised/Supportive Goal	134	134	134	134	134	134	134	134	134	134	134	134	134	134	134	134	134	134	137	137	1343	1343
<b>EQUALS SUPERVISED/SUPPORTIVE GAP</b> (40% of gap/yr is ID pop & 7% of gap/yr is SUD pop that don't qualify for these programs)	-93	-88	-93	-88	-93	-88	-93	-88	-93	-88	-93	-88	-93	-88	-93	-88	-93	-88	-96	-91	-933	-883
<b>Existing Housing w/Time Limited or No Additional Services Resources</b>																						
Affordable Units																						
Wedgewood turnover (5% of 18 slots)	1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		10	
Rent Subsidies	50		15		15		15		15		15		15		15						155	
TOTAL	51		16		16		16		16		16		16		16		1		1		165	

### Annual Total Housing Gap

Year	FY 2012		FY 2013		FY 2014		FY 2015		FY 2016		FY 2017		FY 2018		FY 2019		FY 2020		FY 2021		TOTAL	
	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs	Hsg	Svcs
<b>Existing Services Only Resources</b>																						
New slots		129		129		93		17		17		17		17		17		17		17		17
Turnover slots		5		5		5		35		35		35		35		35		35		35		35
TOTAL (No services only for SUD)		134		134		98		52		52		52		52		52		52		52		52
<hr/>																						
TOTAL HOUSING ONLY MATCHED WITH TOTAL SERVICES ONLY RESOURCES	51	134	16	134	16	98	16	52	16	52	16	52	16	52	16	52	16	52	16	52		
Minus Housing Only Goal	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	5	5	86	
EQUALS REMAINING HOUSING & SERVICES AVAILABLE TO BE DIVERTED (could be used to reduce gap in either housing plus supports, supervised or supportive housing)	42	125	7	125	7	89	7	43	7	43	7	43	7	43	7	43	7	43	11	47	109	644
<b>TOTAL PROJECTED PERSONS HOUSED/SERVED EACH FISCAL YEAR</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>597</b>	<b>1287</b>
MINUS TOTAL HOUSING/SUBSIDY GOAL	160	160	160	160	160	160	160	160	160	160	208	208	160	160	160	160	160	160	158	158	1646	1646
<b>EQUALS TOTAL NET HOUSING/SERVICES GAP EACH FISCAL YEAR</b>	<b>-71</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>-98</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>-101</b>	<b>-7</b>	<b>-100</b>	<b>-52</b>	<b>-101</b>	<b>-53</b>	<b>-148</b>	<b>-100</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>-53</b>	<b>-100</b>	<b>-52</b>	<b>-116</b>	<b>-53</b>	<b>-113</b>	<b>-50</b>	<b>-1049</b>	<b>-359</b>



These data yield several notable observations:

1. The housing type with the largest gap between current need and resources to meet that need is one, two or three bedroom apartments and townhouses. Housing units where services are provided at the **supportive** level of intensity tend to be one or two bedroom units, while units where services are at the **supervised** level of intensity can be efficiencies, one bedroom units, or more typically, two or three bedroom units that are shared. The annual gap for those who need **intensive** housing and services, which is typically provided in group home settings or assisted living, is relatively small in every year except FY17. This increase in the gap simply reflects the plan to meet the increased need for assisted living programs by developing a new program in FY12-FY16 and beginning program operations in FY17.
2. A *positive balance of housing subsidies* in the category of housing with time limited/no additional services is projected every year (approximately seven per year from FY 2013 on). If housing were not directly tied to specific levels of service and leases were in residents' names, these housing subsidies could be redirected to housing at the supervised or supportive intensity levels. For example, if supervised and supportive residential programs operated using a variation of the PACT or ICT team model in which individuals have their own housing and services are arranged separately but occur in the home, then we would greatly increase our system's capacity to utilize certain housing resources that can only be directed to households, not programs. The subsidies would simply need to remain available to CSB-eligible clients who are waiting for housing once the CSB client currently using the subsidy no longer needed it.
3. A *positive balance of service slots* is projected for each fiscal year. Some, but not all, of these service slots can be redirected for use with individuals who need services at the supervised or supportive intensity levels. The services could be paired with the available balance of housing subsidies in FY 2012, thereby further reducing the gap for housing at the supervised/supportive levels.
4. Despite these positive overall balances of housing subsidies and services, there are **significant gaps in both housing and services at the intensive and supervised/supported levels**. The only reason there are overall positive balances is because (1) there has been a recent infusion of housing resources targeted to individuals who need affordable housing with only general, time-limited community services instead of residential support services, and (2) the CSB has created ICT teams that currently have capacity to accept new clients. **These overall positive balances are misleading, because they mask the fact that housing resources have been primarily allocated to a population where the need is not as great (e.g., to those with higher incomes and minimal support needs).** Unless these resources can be redirected, the significant gaps in intensive and supervised/supported housing will remain. Likewise, despite the available capacity the ICT teams have, these teams cannot meet the needs of all clients at every support level because of limitations in the types of services provided and funding available to cover these services. Therefore, while the total net services gap calculation is based on all available ICT capacity being utilized in existing housing opportunities, this capacity cannot be fully applied in this way. As a result, the annual net services gap for each level of service is more reflective of the true services gap.

5. Because there are no new infusions of housing or support resources committed after FY 2012, the outyears rely solely on program turnover and backfilling to meet the annual goal for the number of people housed and served, subject to annual appropriations. Each year, those who are not served must be added to the prior year's unserved population. As a result, the number that remain unserved and in either precarious or inappropriate housing situations each year will grow larger than the number that have been adequately and appropriately housed and served. The unserved number will increase even more once general population growth and new service populations such as those with developmental disabilities, traumatic brain injury and service-related conditions are considered.

This table does not fully convey how the service funding limitations for specific populations impede access to housing. Funding for services is provided in "stovepipes": certain populations only qualify for specific service funding sources, so some populations are unable to access the services they need even if they receive a housing subsidy. Therefore, the number projected to be housed and served at each intensity level may be lower than is shown, unless funding sources for services are redesigned to serve individuals by their level of intensity instead of their diagnosis.

For example, the table shows housing resources available for approximately 45 clients per year at the supervised/supportive intensity level. The CSB may not be able to fully utilize these resources for persons with intellectual disabilities, mental illness or substance use disorders because there is limited service funding available for these populations at this need level. The 419 individuals with intellectual disabilities who need supportive services with their housing typically rely on Medicaid Waiver funding to pay for these services. However, only those whose level of functioning qualifies them for an intermediate care facility are eligible for the waiver. Many people with intellectual disabilities who need supportive services to live in community housing are not eligible for Medicaid Waiver because their level of functioning is too "high." Moreover, those who do qualify are on a long waiting list and are often not considered to have an "urgent need" for a waiver which would give them priority on the waiting list. As a result, individuals with intellectual disabilities generally lose the opportunity to receive available housing subsidies because they cannot access the level of supportive services they need. A similar barrier exists for adults with mental illness who require supervised services. Medicaid reimbursement for mental health support services is usually insufficient to cover the cost of care in this setting. Even if subsidy funds were available to assist individuals with the cost of rent, these individuals could not utilize the housing because there is not enough funding to cover the full cost of services. Finally, people with substance use disorders have very limited access to sources of supportive services funding beyond treatment, so they are only able to take advantage of available housing opportunities if they need no more than minimal, often temporary supports to obtain and maintain housing.

*"People need community,  
not individualistic fixes.  
We need to look at creating  
continuity and helping people  
know others for a long period of  
time so they won't fall again."*

The only service that is expected to expand over the next few years is the Intensive Community Treatment (ICT) Teams for adults with mental illness and/or a co-occurring substance use disorder. Unless the ICT teams can expand their target population to persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with substance use disorders who do not have a co-occurring diagnosis, the CSB will be unable to utilize many of the housing resources that come its way.

The CSB strives to leverage housing and services resources to help the maximum number of consumers in greatest need. While focusing on individuals with the most critical housing and service needs, the CSB also tries to use housing subsidies and units in ways that free additional resources for either permanent housing with supports or residential treatment. This sometimes occurs by targeting housing resources to individuals currently served in supervised or supportive housing programs who are on a waitlist for a more independent living arrangement. Helping them secure their own community housing with home-based services enables the CSB to fill the slots they vacated in these fully-funded supervised or supportive housing programs with others from each program's waitlist. This action opens placements in CSB residential treatment programs, which can then also be filled. This is an effective strategy provided there is a steady flow of housing and service resources into the system to keep it flexible enough to meet the needs of those on the waiting list in critical situations, respond to fluctuations in the rental market, and permit the CSB to take advantage of system efficiencies. When resources do not keep pace, however, the system backlogs and leaves clients "stuck" on waiting lists, in programs that no longer meet their needs, or in programs that provide a level of care they no longer need.

## V. Recommended Actions to Address the Gaps

This analysis reveals the vast majority of CSB clients who have an expressed housing need require:

- **deeply subsidized, affordable** housing,
- paired with **supportive, supervised and intensive services**, that are **flexible, individualized, and linked to the client, not the site**, and
- **flexible housing programs with adaptations and modifications that address key housing barriers** including accessibility, credit issues and criminal history.

The following recommendations are presented in priority order, based upon the findings in this report. These recommendations will enable the CSB to break the logjam in our residential system and create housing opportunities that will greatly narrow the gap between the number of individuals who need affordable, supportive housing and the resources available to address their needs.



**Project-based rental subsidies are a 'key' to permanent supportive housing for those the CSB serves.**

**Rental Subsidies Make the Difference:** This review explains why it is so difficult to find qualified individuals for units with below market rents and why it is hard to keep individuals in these units.

Below market rents are frequently aimed at households with incomes at or below 60% of AMI (e.g., a monthly rent no higher than \$1,209 for a one bedroom in FY 2012). However, **over two-thirds of the CSB's clients who need affordable housing can afford no more than \$205/month in rent.** Most of the remaining one-third can afford no more than \$545/month in rent. Overall, reduced or below market rents do not work for most clients because the rents are almost always more than 30% of their incomes (especially when utility costs are included). Moreover, a rent increase of 4% to 5% for those with severely limited incomes may tip their carefully balanced budgets, rendering them unable to fully pay each month's rent and forcing them to move or be evicted. Most homeless, high-school aged youth do not work, and if they do, their income is insufficient to afford an apartment without a rental subsidy. This subgroup of youth would require time-limited to moderate levels of support to function in their own unit.

***Recommendation 1: The CSB should pursue opportunities to work with FCRHA to expand rental subsidies such as Housing Choice Vouchers, project-based Section 8 vouchers and Bridging Affordability rental assistance on an annual basis. When possible, CSB-eligible clients on housing waitlists should receive preference or priority.***

Although nearly 10,000 households are on the combined waiting list for Housing Choice Vouchers and Public Housing<sup>1</sup>, rental subsidies remain the most effective mechanism for housing CSB clients with the lowest incomes who need affordable housing. Units with below market rents are often more than CSB clients can afford; however, rental subsidies enable income-eligible CSB clients to pay a maximum of 30% of their income toward rent. Likewise, units with a combination of reduced rents (e.g., through Low Income Housing Tax Credits, Community Development Block Grant and/or HOME funds, or low/no-cost land) and smaller rent subsidies from other sources (e.g., operating subsidies from public/private sources, capitalized rent or operating reserves in the development budget, sinking funds from excess cash flow in mixed-income projects) can also achieve this goal, often at a lower cost over the long term. Project-based voucher rent subsidies could be made available to both market and affordable housing providers (especially those operating Low Income Housing Tax Credit properties), so the FCRHA has a larger pool of partners with whom it can project-base units. The CSB recently forged agreements with the FCRHA that demonstrate both of these approaches. At Wedgewood Apartments, eighteen CSB clients receive below market rents equivalent to 30% of household income using a combination of reduced rents and rental subsidies. At Stonegate Apartments, six CSB clients live in units with project based vouchers that enable them to pay 30% no more than of their monthly adjusted household income toward rent.

Opportunities to utilize project-based vouchers in group homes and instances where two to four persons with disabilities wish to live together as a family should also be explored. Clarification of HUD guidelines and regulations is needed in this area. Meanwhile, more flexible rent subsidies from other sources are required to support CSB clients in shared living and group home settings. These subsidies are more economical, since they can supplement several individuals contributing

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<sup>1</sup> *Fairfax County Redevelopment & Housing Authority FY 2011-FY 2015 Consolidated Plan.* Retrieved August 4, 2011 from [http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/rha/consplan/fy20112015fiveyearcond\\_plan\\_hud\\_submission\\_final.pdf](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/rha/consplan/fy20112015fiveyearcond_plan_hud_submission_final.pdf) .

30% of their incomes toward one unit's rent, rather than single-income households each contributing 30% of their income to rent separate units.

Allocating these rental subsidies to CSB-eligible clients on housing waitlists through the establishment of preferences and priorities helps the CSB and the FCHRA target subsidies to the clients with the most significant needs at each service level. CSB staff can also assist clients as they navigate DHCD's eligibility determination and voucher orientation process by using the FCRHA's third party notification process. Finally, CSB staff can link clients to nonprofit housing locators to help find affordable, accessible units.

Until major cost-of-living adjustments are made to the federal Supplemental Security Income and Social Security insurance programs to fully cover basic needs such as housing, it will be critical to find ways to continue expanding long-term rent subsidy opportunities for low-income Fairfax County residents with significant disabilities who are unable to earn sufficient incomes to meet basic needs. One strategy is to collaborate with the FCRHA on an application for Housing Choice Voucher set-asides for non-elderly persons with disabilities. Another strategy is to encourage nonprofit partners to apply for Section 811 project rental assistance contracts without the capital component. A third approach is to expand local short-term rent subsidies for other populations and encourage FCRHA to create a preference or priority for low-income people with disabilities on County housing waitlists to receive Housing Choice Vouchers and project based units that turn over. In addition, FCRHA could designate a greater percentage of HOME funds for tenant based rental assistance than acquisition/rehabilitation. This action, however, would make it necessary to turn other sources for additional funds to help support the development of affordable housing stock.



**Growing the County's affordable housing stock is vital to building housing opportunities for those the CSB serves.**

***Recommendation 2: The CSB should support efforts to make local and statewide policy changes and develop resources that will stimulate the production of units for very low income households, especially those with disabilities.*** The more affordable a unit's base rent is, the lower a tenant's monthly rental subsidy will be. This statement makes economic sense, yet it is only true under two conditions: (1) rental subsidies are available and (2) there are affordable units available on the market that will accept the subsidies. Unfortunately, neither condition is currently true.

We already know there is a dearth of rental subsidies in the county. There is also a corresponding shortage of available, affordable housing stock. According to Fairfax County's Redevelopment and Housing Authority's FY 2012 strategic plan, over 8,000 rental units that were affordable to households with incomes at or below 70 percent of AMI were lost between 2002 and 2010 due to rising rents, redevelopment and condominium conversions.<sup>2</sup> Despite the preservation of more

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<sup>2</sup> Fairfax County Redevelopment & Housing Authority FY 2012 Strategic Plan Action Plan. Retrieved August 4, 2011 from <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/rha/strategicplan/fy2012strategicplanactionplanfinal.pdf>.



than 2,000 units through the Board of Supervisors' Penny for Housing initiative, affordable units continue to be lost and a daunting gap remains. The plan suggests that, without aggressive programs to preserve and create affordable rental units, the county will be ill-prepared to accommodate projected job growth and the increased demand for lower-cost housing by households with incomes below 120 percent of AMI. This loss of affordable stock, combined with the economic downturn, has placed significant pressure on the rental market. According to the Transwestern Mid-Atlantic Multifamily Group, the mid-2011 vacancy rate for investment-grade apartments in the Washington metropolitan area was 3.1%. This is the third lowest vacancy rate in the country, behind only New York City and Philadelphia.<sup>3</sup> It is likely the vacancy rate for more modest, affordable units was even lower, since competition for these units is greater and current residents do not want to lose their reasonable rents. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume there are few, if any, units on the local market that will take rental subsidies. Growing the stock of affordable rentals is a critical step toward housing people with disabilities.

A number of policy and resource development initiatives are underway at the local and state levels that could improve affordable housing production with a focus on people with disabilities. Nonprofit housing providers, concerned developers and localities are pushing for the creation of a statewide Housing Trust Fund that can provide low- to no-interest financing that will reduce the rents for low-income units, including units for people with disabilities. Another statewide group of housing advocates is suggesting changes to the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program to ensure it expands the production of affordable, accessible housing. Another group of disability advocates is looking at how the \$30M down payment to Virginia's Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services Trust Fund could support community housing for people with disabilities. Many of these coalitions are demanding that existing funding sources coordinate so they target the same populations and income levels, to focus resources on those with the greatest needs.

**Supportive Services Make the Difference:** Simply offering CSB clients a rental subsidy will not guarantee they successfully obtain and maintain housing in the community. Many clients who lack affordable, accessible, integrated housing options also face barriers in accessing supportive services to help find, apply for and move into housing, link with community resources, learn community living skills, obtain a personal attendant, acquire necessary assistive technology, monitor physical and mental health, build employment skills, access job opportunities, find accessible transportation, and manage crises. Individuals with developmental disabilities, traumatic brain injuries and service-related disabilities will face similar barriers to accessing supportive services. For example, the Fairfax Area Disability Services Board's 2009 Needs Assessment reported that, of the 371 respondents with physical or sensory disabilities, 73 had an unmet need for accessible, affordable housing, 61 had an unmet need related to personal attendant services, 59 had an unmet employment need and 82 had an unmet transportation

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<sup>3</sup> Transwestern Mid-Atlantic Multifamily Group. (Publication date unknown). *Washington Baltimore Outlook Mid-2011*. Retrieved August 3, 2011 from [http://www.transwestern.net/Flyers/Bethesda/multifamily/multifamily\\_outlook/2011\\_Q2\\_Multifamily\\_Outlook.pdf](http://www.transwestern.net/Flyers/Bethesda/multifamily/multifamily_outlook/2011_Q2_Multifamily_Outlook.pdf).

need.<sup>4</sup> Brain Injury Services, a local nonprofit service provider, currently serves 32 adults with traumatic brain injuries who need housing. Of this number, five are homeless, nine are precariously housed, and three are living in inappropriate placements (e.g., nursing homes). While 21 of these individuals simply need affordable, accessible housing, another 11 need either group homes that have 24-hour staff available or living situations where aides can be shared among residents. In addition, the Homeless Liaison for Fairfax County Public Schools reports the homeless youth she works with also require job assistance, medical, dental, and mental health care assistance, life skills and financial management assistance, and legal aid for immigration-related issues. While the CSB may not directly provide all of these services to these populations, it plays a critical role in the provision of case management to link CSB-eligible populations to such services.



**Individuals often need supportive services to remain at home. They also need a home in which to receive supportive services.**

While resources for affordable housing subsidies and production are critical, a corresponding effort must also be mounted to facilitate the development and expansion of supportive services to help individuals with mental illness, intellectual disabilities and substance use disorders obtain and maintain their housing. The services must be funded and structured in ways that enable them to be implemented “just in time,” as housing opportunities arise. The CSB can serve as a leading agency on the development of the county’s planned supportive services blueprint, which will help the county’s human services agencies coordinate the services many persons with disabilities need to successfully participate in affordable housing programs.

Disability advocates and housing advocates are beginning to see the benefits of supporting one another’s efforts to expand affordable housing. As funding streams for services and housing decrease, it becomes more critical to leverage mutual resources. The CSB can play a crucial role in garnering the disability community’s support for both broad and targeted initiatives that will facilitate the production of affordable units and supportive services for people with disabilities in community housing through education, public awareness, coalition building, and communication with key decision-makers.

***Recommendation 3: The CSB should thoroughly review the structure and capacity of its residential supportive services system to accommodate new housing opportunities.***

Approximately 75% of CSB clients who need affordable housing need a rental apartment or townhouse. ***If the majority of these clients also need supportive services at either the supportive or supervised level, the CSB will need to study the organization of its existing residential supportive***

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<sup>4</sup> Fairfax County Disability Services Planning and Development. (April 2009). *2009 Needs Assessment: Report on Findings Fairfax Area Disability Services Board*. [http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dsb/2009\\_needs\\_assessment\\_findings.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dsb/2009_needs_assessment_findings.htm).

*services system to determine what additional capacity will be required, how to most effectively deploy existing staff to individual units throughout the county, what services could be provided by the private sector, and how additional capacity will be funded.* One key policy consideration will be “de-linking” supportive services from existing housing. If supportive services are provided independently from housing, it is possible to increase, decrease or change services, depending on the client’s needs, without requiring the client to move to a new residence. In addition, if a client’s support needs decrease, the service provider can be deployed to another client who may require additional support. Another important consideration will be moving clients with existing CSB rental subsidies to rental subsidies from other sources, whether through FCRHA housing choice vouchers or public housing units, Virginia Department of Social Services auxiliary grants, or capitalized rent reserves for specific housing projects. This action will enable the CSB to redirect funding from rental subsidies to service delivery, thereby bolstering its capacity to deliver supportive services to clients with existing and new rental subsidies. Finally, if alternative funding sources are required to fill the gap in support services for specific populations who do not qualify for existing funding mechanisms, these alternative funding sources should be as flexible as possible. Eligibility for these sources should be based **not** on diagnosis but upon the intensity of services needed.

***Recommendation 4: The CSB’s Financial Assistance Services Team (FAST) will develop its knowledge of service funding sources available to persons with developmental disabilities, traumatic brain injuries and service-related conditions.***

As these populations become integrated into the CSB service delivery system, it will be critical to link individuals to federal, state and local funding sources for home-based supportive services, including personal assistance, nursing, assistive technology and behavioral supports. The FAST will develop competencies in the areas of eligibility requirements, application processes, and coordination of funding sources.

**Flexible Housing Programs Make the Difference:** Individuals with poor credit records or criminal histories are often summarily excluded from rental opportunities based on strict tenant selection criteria, regardless of the steps they are taking to improve their situations. Appeals based upon requests for reasonable accommodations of policy for disability under the Fair Housing Act are sometimes granted, but many individuals are still denied housing.

Poor credit is an issue for ten percent of CSB clients who need affordable housing. It is also an issue for homeless youth who have not yet established a credit history. Seventeen percent of clients who need affordable housing have had some involvement in the criminal justice system. The CSB has historically negotiated master leases and lease guarantees on behalf of CSB clients who cannot qualify for a rental unit under a landlord’s tenant selection criteria because of credit or criminal record issues. The advantage of this approach is that it enables clients to be housed because the CSB assumes the financial risk that a tenant with poor credit or a criminal record poses. There are several disadvantages, though. When the CSB signs a master lease, clients no longer have landlord-tenant rights because they do not sign a lease agreement: they sign a program agreement, which does not contain basic lease terms and conditions. Second, the CSB is now the clients’ advocate, service



provider AND the agency responsible for removing clients from their units if they do not adhere to their program agreements. These roles are often in conflict. Third, if the housing offers below-market rent, the CSB as an entity cannot qualify for the reduced rent under a master lease. Reduced rents are calculated on household income, but the CSB is not a household, it is a county agency. Therefore, the CSB will always pay the higher rent on a unit that might have a reduced rent option. In addition, once the CSB has master-leased or guaranteed units, it has typically not reviewed whether clients, after several years, have built a positive rental history or are able to assume a greater portion of the rent that the CSB has been guaranteeing. Those who could rent the units in their own names could potentially qualify for a lower rent and remain in the same unit.

***Recommendation 5: Collaborate with local nonprofit housing organizations to create a “third party” master leasing program.*** One variation on master leasing and lease guarantees that would address some of these issues is a partnership between the CSB and a nonprofit organization that could master-lease and guarantee units on the CSB’s behalf. If a nonprofit organization served in this capacity, clients would still be housed and could sign a sub-lease agreement that would preserve their landlord-tenant rights. Alternately, the nonprofit could sign an occupancy agreement with the tenant that stipulates terms under which the guarantee and rental subsidy would continue or discontinue and outlines the tenants’ appeal rights. The CSB would no longer have conflicting roles: the nonprofit assumes the intermediary role in the master lease and can discontinue the rental subsidy if the client violates his/her sub-lease agreement, while the CSB can be the advocate and service provider. The nonprofit would also be unable to receive reduced rent under a master lease. However, the CSB and nonprofit could establish an annual review with landlords to determine whether clients have satisfactorily addressed their credit and criminal records and are able to assume the leases in their names. At such time, the rent could be reviewed and determined using the individual’s income.

*“Thank God for Fairfax County  
keeping people from dying.  
Everything that has happened  
to me is because of me.  
But sometimes people  
need a change.”*

***Recommendation 6: Explore housing policies, initiatives and approaches employed by ex-offender advocacy organizations and re-entry housing programs nationwide, especially those that serve adults with mental illness and/or substance use disorders.*** The challenge of housing adults who have had contact with the criminal justice system is not unique to agencies such as the CSB: public and private human services organizations serving individuals with criminal histories and their families in the general community also confront this issue. Various housing policies and housing options have been developed to address the lack of housing for this population, including:

- Collaborating with the FCRHA in assessing the Section 8 and Public Housing Administrative Plans to examine whether policies and procedures can be modified to

address both the public housing authority's resident safety concerns and the needs of those with criminal records to obtain housing.<sup>5</sup>

- Developing strong relationships with landlords throughout the county to expand the availability of housing for low-income CSB clients. This entails establishing a positive track record with clients in apartment complexes and responding quickly and attentively to address landlord concerns.
- Creating local rent guarantee programs that (1) educate prospective tenants about landlord screening barriers they may have, take steps to address any barriers and prepare them for successful tenancy; and (2) provide program graduates access to a Landlord Guarantee that gives landlords an assurance of reimbursement up to \$2,000 for damages, eviction-related court costs and up to one month's non-payment of rent.
- Assisting tenants with the cost of the landlord's premium for commercial "damage" insurance which secures the tenant's performance of the terms and conditions of the rental agreement. This insurance must be a rider on the landlord's property and casualty insurance contract that names the tenant as "co-insured." According to Virginia's Residential Landlord Tenant Act, such payments are deemed rent instead of a security deposit. The landlord cannot require both security deposits and the cost of damage insurance premiums if the sum total of these exceeds two month's rent.
- Developing a program to bond tenants with criminal backgrounds to facilitate access to housing. The bond is essentially a business insurance policy that protects landlords in case of loss of money or property due to tenant-caused damage to the unit. It would serve as a "guarantee" to the landlord that the individual who leases the apartment will comply with the lease terms. The landlord would receive the bond free of charge, which serves as an incentive to rent to an individual who is an ex-offender or has other risk factors in their personal background. The program could be modeled after the U.S. Department of Labor's Federal Bonding Program (FBP) for individuals with high risk backgrounds (e.g., ex-offenders, those with poor credit, persons recovering from substance use disorders) who are seeking employment. These bonds are typically issued for \$5,000 in coverage for a six-month period and mailed to the employer once a job offer is made. Upon expiration, the purchasing organization (e.g., the local Workforce Investment Board) can renew the bond for the individual with the same employer. Renewals are available for purchase by the employer at a regular commercial rate if no claim has been paid for employee dishonesty. Travelers Casualty and Surety Company of America purchases the bonds for the FBP and the McLaughlin Company issues these bonds and provides technical assistance related to bond issues, processing and utilization. The bonds can be purchased in packages of 25, 50, 75 and 100 bond units for \$84 to \$98 per unit (larger packages cost less per unit).

In addition to policy changes, education and public awareness initiatives to mitigate the impact of criminal record as a barrier to housing should be investigated. For example, individuals who had arrests that did not result in convictions or individuals who have old or minor convictions may be

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<sup>5</sup> Legal Action Center. (Publication date unknown). *Improving housing opportunities for individuals with conviction records. Package one: model policies for public housing authorities*. Retrieved March 16, 2011 from <http://www.lac.org/toolkits/housing/package1.htm>

able to expunge their criminal records to improve their ability to get both jobs and housing. Many CSB clients do not know they may be able to expunge their record, and they may have difficulty gathering the information needed to file a petition in circuit court. Educating clinicians, support coordinators and clients about this process may help some clients remove a barrier to housing.



**Affordable, accessible housing “opens doors” to community living for CSB consumers.**

Finally, landlords increasingly require background checks for occupants on a master lease and assert their right to reject certain occupants who have been convicted of extremely dangerous offenses that could present a threat to other residents’ health, safety or peaceful enjoyment of the premises. As a result, alternatives to master leases and lease guarantees are necessary for this segment of the population. Public and private housing providers have developed numerous bricks-and-mortar housing options for adults with mental illness and/or substance use

disorders who have been involved in the criminal justice system, including short- and long-term transitional housing and permanent supportive housing. The point in time at which clients re-enter the community has a significant impact on the existing housing options available. Individuals incarcerated in jail for up to two years or incarcerated in prison for more than two years have much greater difficulty securing housing than those who are released after arrest, participate in pre-trial diversion programs or are tried without conviction. Likewise, the extent of clients’ involvement in the criminal justice system also impacts the site selection (single-site structure, clustered-site, scattered-site), the operating philosophy (e.g., housing first vs. housing ready), and the level of services offered (intensive, structured treatment vs. case management and linkage to supportive services).<sup>6</sup> Overall, studies indicate housing-first approaches may be more appropriate than housing-ready programs or transitional housing for adults with mental illness who have been involved the criminal justice system but not incarcerated. Some housing providers have used “combination” or “convertible” housing to capitalize on the advantages of both transitional and permanent housing models. Combination housing uses locations that have both transitional and permanent apartments that are co-located in the same building. Clients can move from one unit to another as they progress toward independence. Convertible housing involves the process of converting the terms of tenancy from temporary to permanent so the client does not have to move from unit to unit. Ultimately, the CSB must gather more detailed data on the number of individuals

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<sup>6</sup> Roman, C.G., McBride, E.C. & Osborne, J.W.L. (2006). *Principles and practice in housing for persons with mental illness who have had contact with the criminal justice system*. Retrieved on March 16, 2011 from [http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411314\\_housingmentalillness.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411314_housingmentalillness.pdf)

at different levels of involvement in the criminal justice system and their specific housing and service needs to guide the planning and development of new housing options for this population.

This review also highlights architectural and physical accessibility as a critical element for over 200 CSB clients who need affordable housing. The need for accessible housing is divided between those who need these features in apartments and townhouses, and those who need these features in single family homes (likely, group homes). One of the biggest obstacles to obtaining affordable, accessible units is getting both affordability and accessibility in the same unit that is available for rent. One CSB client who gets a rental subsidy may search for six months to find an accessible unit on the market, while another CSB client with no rental subsidy may find an accessible unit in one week but cannot afford it. Likewise, there is no legal requirement to construct single family homes according to specific accessibility standards. As a result, most single family homes throughout the County have limited or no accessibility. Developing accessible group homes for CSB clients will require major capital infusions, either for significant accessibility modifications to existing homes or tearing down inaccessible structures and building new, fully accessible homes.

***Recommendation 7: Implement strategies to increase the number of accessible units targeted to CSB clients, either by making existing CSB-designated units accessible or by securing additional accessible units for long-term use.*** There are a number of options for developing affordable, accessible units, depending on clients' current living situations (and whether they can stay in their homes if they were accessible and affordable). One option is developing a program similar to the City of Alexandria's RAMP (Rental Accessibility Modification Program) Program, which provides grants to residents living in rental apartments to make accessibility modifications with their landlords' approval. This program would allow CSB clients who already have affordable housing to make accessibility improvements. If the housing unit is part of the CSB's "housing stock," the unit's accessible features could benefit another client should the current resident ever move. Arlington County's supportive housing program uses another approach, which is to partner with a nonprofit that is developing an affordable housing project and to contribute a block of funds (e.g., \$50,000 per unit) for accessibility improvements in one unit. The unit is then reserved for the supportive housing program for a long-term period (e.g., 15 years) at a below market rent (e.g., 50% AMI). The higher the contribution, the lower the below market rent can be negotiated. Alternately, existing units at a nonprofit affordable housing development could be retrofitted using the same model. Likewise, project-based rental subsidies could be targeted specifically to existing accessible units owned by nonprofits and other private landlords.

In several cases, fully accessible group homes in the county that have been acquired and renovated by nonprofit developers using Community Development Block Grant and/or HOME Investment Partnership funds with a CSB contribution for accessibility modifications. Since there is no debt on these homes, the rents are extremely affordable: they are based on operating costs and a replacement reserve fund. Regardless, housing six adults whose sole income is Supplemental Security Income only yields \$1,200 per month that can go toward rent. The monthly operating expenses and reserves for one, six-bedroom home are typically at least \$2,000/month. Therefore, some type of operating subsidy is still required.

***Recommendation 8: Create a CSB team to determine clients' eligibility for various sources of housing assistance, help clients apply for housing assistance, and help clients find and apply for community housing.***

The CSB recently held a Consumer Housing Forum for individuals with mental illness and substance use disorders. More than 20 people testified, and a major theme that emerged was a sense of feeling “stuck.”

Consumers want to find housing but cannot afford it in most apartment complexes with market or below-market rents and strict qualifying criteria. They have difficulty navigating the housing assistance maze in the county and do not know what their housing options are or how to request reasonable accommodations. Moreover, most CSB staff who provide case management do not have specialized expertise regarding the county's housing programs and eligibility requirements or how to find affordable housing options that will accept individuals who have poor credit or criminal backgrounds.



**Poor credit ratings are among several major barriers that prevent CSB consumers from obtaining housing.**

Several years ago, the county partnered with local nonprofit housing organizations to offer Housing Locator services. By building relationships with landlords and seeking alternatives to traditional apartment housing, these Housing Locators are doing a remarkable job helping individuals and families with limited incomes find housing they can afford. However, there are only ten housing locators for the entire county, and their caseloads are extremely high. Moreover, they tend to work with households who have either received a rental subsidy or have incomes greater than SSI or Social Security. They do not typically help clients identify and apply for housing assistance programs. This past year, the CSB created a Financial Assistance Services Team (FAST) that assesses CSB clients' eligibility for various programs that fund basic needs and supportive services and helps clients apply for these funding sources. This resource has improved our clients' access to SSI, Medicaid, veteran's benefits and private insurance. Team members have limited knowledge, however, about housing assistance programs and how to access them.

**The CSB could merge the Housing Locator and the FAST Team concepts to create a new CSB service: a Housing FAST Team.** This team would focus on expanding relationships with property managers and individual landlords, developing and negotiating traditional and non-traditional housing options, assessing client eligibility for various housing assistance programs, helping clients apply for these programs, and locating community housing for clients. The Housing FAST Team would coordinate efforts with the Housing Locators and the FAST Team to maximize access to funding sources and housing opportunities.



***Recommendation 9: Support interagency and public-private collaborations to develop appropriate housing options for homeless youth.*** Communities often respond to youth homelessness by offering emergency shelter and/or transitional housing in **adult** programs. These options are typically temporary, inappropriate for youth, and provide only a time-limited housing option where young people can stay and gain the employment, decision-making and independent living skills they need to obtain a permanent housing arrangement on their own. Youth housing models, on the other hand, use service delivery approaches that incorporate positive youth development (PYD) principles.

According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, youth housing programs incorporate educational, vocational, and life skills training; physical and mental health care; counseling and case management services that encourage youth to continue their personal development and gain independent living skills that will sustain them throughout adulthood, while providing the security and support they need as adolescents. Special attention is placed upon delivering trauma-informed services. Youth housing programs with PYD services have flexible time limits and recognize adolescent tendencies to test rules and limits. Rarely are “zero-tolerance” policies a response to irresponsible or even threatening behavior. Additionally, these programs allow young people to discharge, voluntarily exit a placement, or re-enter housing programs as their current needs or abilities change. Youth housing combined with PYD services match the youth’s level of responsibility with his/her present skill sets and developmental abilities. Programs also provide opportunities for youth to be challenged beyond their current abilities to develop and progress to the next level of taking care of themselves and fulfilling their responsibilities.

Youth housing models include: group homes, dormitories, host homes, shared homes, congregate or single site housing, scattered-site housing, employment-focused housing, permanent supportive housing, and residential treatment. Several of these residential models are similar to those the CSB already offers in collaboration with the FCRHA, private landlords and nonprofit housing providers. Therefore, there is some level of system infrastructure in place on which we can build. The service delivery approaches, however, must be adapted to meet the developmental needs of the younger population. These related housing models, which demonstrate promise toward preparing youth to live independently, are described below.

Community-based group homes for young people (often under age 18) typically offer shared bedrooms and communal living spaces. Many group homes require participation in a structured daily schedule that includes meal times and recreational activities. Often there are several rules to maintain program compliance. These homes incorporate neighboring community services. Homes are often associated with the foster care, juvenile justice, and child mental health systems, and are designed for young people who cannot be reunited with their



**Going it alone cannot be a housing option for Fairfax County youth.**

families. These homes are “non-secure residential programs” that emphasize family-style living in a homelike atmosphere. Staff takes the primary role in cooking and housekeeping. Group homes can combine court-appointed youth with youth who are placed there by child welfare. They use existing community services, but also provide 24-hour staff supervision in shifts. Staff members do not live on site. The goal of this model is to increase the residents’ capacity to enter independent living programs.


The shared home model resembles the sponsored placement model. It enables young people to build on basic life skills and enhance self-sufficiency. Shared houses are homes that young people share with a live-in staff member or family that serves as staff. Shared homes are ideal for young people interested in having their own space, yet willing to live with other people. Residents must be able to live with and respect others’ time and property. Housemates share a kitchen and living area, but usually have their own bedrooms. Residents prepare their own meals and perform housekeeping. Most shared homes provide residents their own bedroom. With direction from residential staff, residents depend on each other to create a structure that allows for a comfortable living environment. Young people living in shared homes want their living environment to reflect their maturity, taste, and lifestyle. Shift staff is highly discouraged because they disrupt a ‘home-like’ environment. Residents need resident managers who will build trusting, caring relationships. Shared home residents are housemates with someone officially living there to enforce house rules and harmony. Geographic location is important: shared homes should be close to public transportation, schools, jobs, and support networks.

Supervised apartments give youth a chance to practice independent living with guidance and immediate access to assistance. Supervised apartments are “an apartment building, rented or owned by an agency, in which numerous youth live with a live-in supervisor who occupies one of the units.” Supervised apartments or “cluster apartments” can house youth in units with or without roommates. Most programs encourage gradual steps to increase a young person’s responsibilities regarding their needs and other freedoms, such as visitors and overnight guests. In general, supervised apartments are located together, and young people serve as each other’s neighbors. Apartments typically have a kitchen and bathroom. The size and number of units in a building determines the program’s capacity. This model usually serves older youth, ages 17 to 24, who have some independent living skills but can benefit from on-site access to services. Most supervised apartment programs are voluntary, and residents are encouraged to participate in the program components which include mental and physical health services, group meetings, life skills development, and other activities. This model allows for the integration of youth with varying levels of service needs and independent living skills.

Scattered-site apartments are privately owned units rented by an agency or by a youth. Youth live independently or with roommates receiving financial support, training, and some monitoring. Organizations usually provide apartments in various geographic areas. In scattered-site apartments or semi-supervised apartments, the tenant or agency has a lease or occupancy agreement, and the length of tenancy is flexible as long as the youth or agency follows the conditions of the lease or agreement. If the agency holds the lease, the goal is to

transfer the contract eventually to the resident, so that the youth can transition from the program and keep their housing. The services associated with scattered-site apartments include apartment visits and staff advocates. Staff is directed to visit apartments at least once a week or more depending on the youth's circumstances. Staffing is a critical component of success. Scattered-site programs require experienced staff members who can be proactive in addressing the challenges and adjustments youth must make to live independently. Case management is the main supportive service. Case managers must balance the roles of assisting youth participants in navigating mainstream services, providing constructive feedback, demanding accountability for inappropriate behavior from the youth, and being an advocate for youth residents. Many scattered-site apartment programs help with moving services and provide the standard items needed to set up an apartment. Depending on the program, financial assistance can decrease as the youth's financial ability increases. Program participants must develop internal control mechanisms and an understanding of consequential actions apart from the continual presence of a caregiver or enforcer. Youth can experiment with control mechanisms and practice healthy coping skills to deal with loneliness, control visitors, interact with neighbors, and cooperate with landlords.

**Bringing It All Together Makes the BIGGEST Difference:** Imagine trying to coordinate getting a deep rental subsidy in an accessible unit that will accept your credit or criminal history, while at the same time you have to apply for funding for supportive services and find a service provider who can provide the right level of assistance. You have two months to put all of the puzzle pieces in place or you may lose your housing opportunity. This is a monumental task for anyone. Now imagine trying to do all of this when you are at the top of a housing waitlist but at the bottom of a supportive services waitlist, or vice versa.



*"I don't need a  
handout...  
I need a jump  
start."*

Federal Section 8 and Public Housing regulations have strict rules around the administration of waiting lists. These rules will not allow the Section 8 or Public Housing programs to offer the next available voucher to a household that may have just gotten supportive services from the CSB but is at the bottom of the Section 8 waitlist. As a result, no matter how strong a case clients make, **sometimes those who can access supportive services must forego them because they cannot secure the housing they need.** Other times, clients who receive a housing subsidy **lose the subsidy and the housing because they cannot access supportive services.**

As discussed above, reserving rental subsidies for CSB clients will facilitate coordination between the CSB and the FCRHA to ensure that subsidies go to individuals with mental illness, intellectual disabilities and substance use disorders who have the highest priority housing needs and who have the CSB's help to secure and maintain supportive services. An example of a system that is in place and working is DHCD's Homeless Preference Referral process. DHCD amended its Section 8 Administrative Plan to provide a preference for individuals with special needs who are homeless. CSB clinicians and support coordinators assess and refer homeless clients for housing and supportive services. Housing referrals are sent to Good Shepherd Housing & Family Services,



which reviews the applications for completeness and prioritizes them. When a voucher becomes available in the Homeless Preference pool, DHCD obtains the highest priority application, conducts an eligibility determination with the client and his or her clinician/support coordinator, and if the client is found eligible, performs a voucher orientation with them. Once a voucher is awarded, the clinician/ support coordinator links the client to a housing locator to help with the housing search. At the same time, the clinician/support coordinator works with CSB residential, clinical and financial services staff to help the client access Medicaid and other benefits, develop a supportive services plan, and get connected to service providers.

Over the past three years, the Community Services Board has made major strides toward “bringing it all together” and opening new doors to housing for individuals with mental illness, intellectual disabilities and substance use disorders. We have obtained rental subsidies and units at below market rent through new and renewed partnerships with the Fairfax County Redevelopment & Housing Authority, the Department of Housing & Community Development, the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness, local nonprofit affordable housing organizations, and private landlords. But hundreds of people are still on waiting lists, in desperate need of housing. We cannot lose our way. As a county and as a community, we must forge the path home.